

BOTT HOUSE
216 Cowardin Avenue, Richmond, Virginia
HENRICO Co.

HABS No. Va-119

HABS
VA

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Eugene Bradbury, District Officer
210 East Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia

BOTT HOUSE
216 Cowardin Avenue, Richmond, Virginia

Owner: Union Security and Realty Corporation, American Building,
Richmond, Virginia

Date of Erection: From the design of the work it is believed to
have been built in the late 18th century

Architect:

Builder: Miles Bott

Present Condition: Generally fair. Original front porch removed
and replaced with present porch. Original stone platform and
steps at side door removed and replaced with present small porch.
Roof may have had central dormers but no evidence to show this.
The rear porch was originally open, but later enclosed with
weather-boarding and windows.

Number of Stories: Basement, one story and attic story above with
dormers.

Materials of Construction: Brick basement, frame upper portion.
First floor framing of rough hewn beams and joists exposed. Twin
brick chimneys on both ends. Present roof and sides of dormers
covered with tin. Moulded wood sills, windows with original blinds.
Interior finish scant, plastered walls and ceilings, except basement
ceiling. Mantel in parlor evidently not original of later design
and too small for original fireplace opening.

Other Existing Records: There are indications that the Bott House
was erected in 1819, by Miles Bott. As recorded in Chesterfield
County Taxes, in 1819, Miles Bott paid taxes on twenty-six and one-
half acres with assessment of \$42. In 1820, his assessment on
twenty-six and one-half acres was \$7,950, with \$5,400 valuation of
improvement on buildings. Recorded in Deed Book No. 33 of Chester-
field County, in 1841, Richard Archer, having a deed of trust
(November 10, 1819) on a parcel of land near Manchester, containing
twenty-six and one-half acres, being the same parcel on which
Miles Bott resided, sold at public auction the said tract of land,
with Green Hall as highest bidder.

Additional Data: The following is taken from an article in the Saturday News Supplement, dated December 1, 1900, titled "The Old Bott House," and written by David L. Pulliam:

"A most beautiful and Distinctive Colonial Building -- One of the best Preserved types of the Earlier Architecture of the State -- the Seat of a Refined Hospitality and Society -- the Home of the Most Noted Families of Manchester."

"Passing from the rear door of the hall into the "back-yard," you will observe the large garden, once a most beautiful flower-garden, and still retaining much of its reputed beauty and picturesqueness. There is a lovely walk from the back porch through the garden-gate, which leads to a 'olump' of box-wood, which are the largest ever known in this community."

This article recognized Miles Bott, a wealthy influential gentleman and citizen of Chesterfield County, as the builder of the house. Erected immediately after the Revolutionary War, according to the above article, the old house was a gathering place for the young and amusement seekers, in its palmy days. The place was called "Sparta" by Miles Bott who lived there until his death in 1840. At that time the estate was bought by Green Hall, who occupied the old house until his death in 1850. The property was then involved in a Chancery suit and divided into twenty-three town lots, that lay on the Manchester side of the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad, which were sold; George W. Snelling retained for a while the Old Bott House. In 1862, the old house and the adjacent lot passed into the possession of Samuel Atkinson, who sold the property to Miss Elizabeth Jane Baird, the grandmother of the Misses Baird and Gill, the present occupants.

Miles Bott is believed to be the son of John Bott, who seemed to be the first resident in Chesterfield County by that name, as the name first appears in the Inventory Books in 1779.

In 1806 Miles Bott was one of the Jurors in the trial of Aaron Burr, which is recorded as one of, if not the most famous trial in Virginia.

Bibliography:

Tax Books of Chesterfield County, filed in the Archive Department of the State Library, Richmond, Virginia

Deed Book, No. 33, of Chesterfield County, filed in the Court Room at Chesterfield Courthouse, Virginia

Burr's Trial, taken in shorthand, by David Robertson,
Counsellor at Law. Published by Hopkins and Earle.
Copyright 1808. Fry and Kammerer, Printers.

Abstract of Title, in the possession of Miss Bessie Gill,
216 Cowardin Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.

Saturday News Supplement, December 1, 1900.

Virginia Thompson
Supervising Historian *mw*

Approved: August 7, 1936

Eugene Bradbury
MAJOR EUGENE BRADBURY, A. I. L.
District Officer

Rev. Oct. 7. 1936. — T.W.